

Japanese



HAIKU

A PETER
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PRESS
BOOK

JAPANESE HAIKU

TWO HUNDRED TWENTY
EXAMPLES OF
SEVENTEEN-SYLLABLE
POEMS



BY BASHO · BUSON · ISSA
SHIKI · SOKAN · KIKAKU
AND OTHERS · TRANSLATED
BY PETER BEILENSEN



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A NOTE ON JAPANESE HAIKU

THE *hokku* — or more properly *haiku* — is a tiny verse-form in which Japanese poets have been working for hundreds of years. Originally it was the first part of the *tanka*, a five-line poem, often written by two people as a literary game: one writing three lines, the other, two lines capping them. But the *hokku*, or three-line starting verse, became popular as a separate form. As such it is properly called *haiku*, and retains an incredible popularity among all classes of Japanese.

There are only seventeen syllables in the *haiku*, the first and third lines contain five, the second line seven. There is almost always in it the name of the season, or a key word giving the season by inference. (This is a short-cut, costing the poet only one or two syllables, whereby the reader can immediately comprehend the weather, the foliage, the bird and insect-life — and the emotions traditional to the season: factors which almost always are important in the poem.) But there is also, in a good *haiku*, more than a mere statement of feeling or a picture of nature: there is an implied identity between two seemingly different things.

The greatest of *haiku*-writers, and the poet who crystallized the style, was Basho (1644-1694). In his later years he was a student of Zen Buddhism,

and his later poems, which are his best, express the rapturous awareness in that mystical philosophy of the identity of life in all its forms. With this awareness, Basho immersed himself in even the tiniest things, and with religious fervor and sure craftsmanship converted them into poetry. He was ardently loved by his followers, and by later poets, and his Zen philosophy has thus been perpetuated in later *haiku*. It is, indeed, a key to the completest appreciation of most *haiku*.

Following Basho in time and fame was Buson (1715-1783) — a little more sophisticated and detached than his predecessor, and an equally exquisite craftsman. The third great *haiku* poet was unhappy Issa (1763-1827), a continual butt of fate. He is less poetic but more lovable than Basho and Buson. His tender, witty *haiku* about his dead children, his bitter poverty, his little insect friends, endear him to every reader. Other masters are of course represented here too.

It is usually impossible to translate a *haiku* literally and have it remain a poem, or remain in the proper seventeen-syllable form. There are several reasons for this. *Haiku* are full of quotations and allusions which are recognized by literate Japanese but not by us; and are full of interior double-meanings almost like James Joyce. And the language is used without connecting-words or tenses or pronouns or indications of singular or plural —

almost a telegraphic form. Obviously a translation cannot be at once so illusive and so terse.

In the *texture* of the poems there is a further difficulty: Japanese is highly polysyllabic. The only way to reproduce such a texture in English is to use Latinized words — normally less sympathetic than the Anglo-Saxon. For all these reasons, the following versions make no pretense to be literal or complete, and some variations in the five-seven-five syllable arrangement have been allowed.

Alterations and interior rhymes, which are common in Japanese because every syllable ends with one of the five vowel sounds (sometimes with the addition of the letter "n") have been freely used; but as in the originals, there are no end-rhymes except some accidental ones.

Although the *haiku* is a three-line poem, the use of a decorative Japanese design alongside each example in this edition has required (in almost every case) the doubling-up of the longer second line. The reader's indulgence is requested for this unorthodox typography.

One final word: the *haiku* is not expected to be always a complete or even a clear statement. The reader is supposed to add to the words his own associations and imagery, and thus to become a co-creator of his own pleasure in the poem. The publishers hope their readers may here co-create such pleasure for themselves!

JAPANESE HAIKU

IN THESE DARK WATERS
DRAWN UP FROM
MY FROZEN WELL . . .
GLITTERING OF SPRING

RINGAI



STANDING STILL AT DUSK
LISTEN . . . IN FAR
DISTANCES
THE SONG OF FROGLINGS!

BUSON



I DREAMED OF BATTLES
AND WAS SLAIN . . .
OH SAVAGE SAMURAI!
INSATIABLE FLEAS!

KIKAKU



IN SILENT MID-NIGHT
OUR OLD SCARECROW
TOPPLES DOWN . . .
WEIRD HOLLOW ECHO

BONCHO





WOMEN PLANTING RICE . . .
UGLY EVERY BIT
ABOUT THEM . . .
BUT THEIR ANCIENT SONG

RAIZAN



WILD GEESE WRITE A LINE
FLAP-FLAPPING
ACROSS THE SKY . . .
COMICAL DUTCH SCRIPT

SOIN



DEAD MY OLD FINE HOPES
AND DRY MY DREAMING
BUT STILL . . .
IRIS, BLUE EACH SPRING

SHUSHIKI



IN THIS WINDY NEST
OPEN YOUR HUNGRY
MOUTH IN VAIN . . .
ISSA, STEPCHILD BIRD

ISSA

BALLET IN THE AIR . . .
TWIN BUTTERFLIES
UNTIL, TWICE WHITE
THEY MEET, THEY MATE
BASHO



ON THE DEATH OF HIS CHILD
DEW EVAPORATES
AND ALL OUR WORLD
IS DEW . . . SO DEAR,
SO FRESH, SO FLEETING
ISSA



BLACK CLOUDBANK BROKEN
SCATTERS IN THE
NIGHT . . . NOW SEE
MOON-LIGHTED MOUNTAINS!
BASHO



SEEK ON HIGH BARE TRAILS
SKY-REFLECTING
VIOLETS . . .
MOUNTAIN-TOP JEWELS
BASHO





FOR A LOVELY BOWL
LET US ARRANGE THESE
FLOWERS . . .
SINCE THERE IS NO RICE

BASHO



NOW THAT EYES OF HAWKS
IN DUSKY NIGHT
ARE DARKENED . . .
CHIRPING OF THE QUAILS

BASHO



MY TWO PLUM TREES ARE
SO GRACIOUS . . .
SEE, THEY FLOWER
ONE NOW, ONE LATER

BUSON



ONE FALLEN FLOWER
RETURNING TO THE
BRANCH? . . . OH NO!
A WHITE BUTTERFLY

MORITAKE

CLOUDBANK CURLING LOW?
AH! THE MOUNTAIN
YOSHINO . . .
CHERRY CUMULUS!

RYOTA



FIE! THIS FICKLE WORLD!
THREE DAYS, NEGLECTED
CHERRY-BRANCH . . .
AND YOU ARE BARE

RYOTA



HANGING THE LANTERN
ON THAT FULL WHITE
BLOOMING BOUGH . . .
EXQUISITE YOUR CARE!

SHIKI



APRIL'S AIR STIRS IN
WILLOW-LEAVES . . .
A BUTTERFLY
FLOATS AND BALANCES

BASHO





IN THE SEA-SURF EDGE
MINGLING WITH
BRIGHT SMALL SHELLS . . .
BUSH-CLOVER PETALS

BASHO



THE RIVER
GATHERING MAY RAINS
FROM COLD STREAMLETS
FOR THE SEA . . .
MURMURING MOGAMI

BASHO



A GATE MADE ALL OF TWIGS
WITH WOVEN GRASS
FOR HINGES . . .
FOR A LOCK . . . THIS SNAIL

ISSA



WIND-BLOWN, RAINED ON . . .
BENT BARLEY-GRASS
YOU MAKE ME
NARROW PATH INDEED

JOSO

ARISE FROM SLEEP, OLD CAT,
AND WITH GREAT YAWNS
AND STRETCHINGS . . .
AMBLE OUT FOR LOVE

ISSA



WHITE CLOUD OF MIST
ABOVE WHITE
CHERRY-BLOSSOMS . . .
DAWN-SHINING MOUNTAINS

BASHO



HI! MY LITTLE HUT
IS NEWLY-THATCHED
I SEE . . .
BLUE MORNING-GLORIES

ISSA



IN THE CITY FIELDS
CONTEMPLATING
CHERRY-TREES . . .
STRANGERS ARE LIKE FRIENDS

ISSA





SEE, SEE, SEE! OH SEE!
OH WHAT TO SAY?
AH YOSHINO . . .

MOUNTAIN-ALL-ABLOOM!

TEISHITSU



GREEN SHADOW-DANCES . . .
SEE OUR YOUNG
BANANA-TREE
PATTERING THE SCREEN

SHIKI



DON'T TOUCH MY PLUMTREE!
SAID MY FRIEND
AND SAYING SO . . .
BROKE THE BRANCH FOR ME

TAIGI



TWILIGHT WHIPPOORWILL . . .
WHISTLE ON,
SWEET DEEPENER
OF DARK LONELINESS

BASHO

RECITING SCRIPTURES ...

STRANGE THE
WONDROUS BLUE I FIND
IN MORNING-GLORIES

KYOROKU



MANY SOLEMN NIGHTS

BLOND MOON, WE STAND
AND MARVEL ...

SLEEPING OUR NOONS AWAY

TEITOKU



MOUNTAIN-ROSE PETALS

FALLING, FALLING,
FALLING NOW ...

WATERFALL MUSIC

BASHO



AMOROUS CAT, ALAS

YOU TOO MUST YOWL
WITH YOUR LOVE ...

OR EVEN WORSE, WITHOUT!

YAHIA





THE LADEN WAGON RUNS
BUMBLING AND CREAKING
DOWN THE ROAD . . .
THREE PEONIES TREMBLE
BUSON



AH ME! I AM ONE
WHO SPENDS HIS LITTLE
BREAKFAST
MORNING-GLORY GAZING
BASHO



MY GOOD FATHER RAGED
WHEN I SNAPPED
THE PEONY . . .
PRECIOUS MEMORY!

TAIRO



BY THAT FALLEN HOUSE
THE PEAR-TREE STANDS
FULL-BLOOMING . . .
AN ANCIENT BATTLE-SITE
SHIKI

IN THE OPEN SHOP
PAPERWEIGHTS ON
PICTURE BOOKS . . .
YOUNG SPRINGTIME BREEZE
KITO



DIM THE GREY COW COMES
MOOING MOOING
AND MOOING
OUT OF THE MORNING MIST
ISSA



TAKE THE ROUND FLAT MOON
SNAP THIS TWIG
FOR HANDLE . . .
WHAT A PRETTY FAN!
SOKAN



SEAS ARE WILD TONIGHT . . .
STRETCHING OVER
SADO ISLAND
SILENT CLOUDS OF STARS
BASHO





WHY SO SCRAWNLY, CAT?
STARVING FOR FAT FISH
OR MICE ...
OR BACKYARD LOVE?

BASHO



DEWDROP, LET ME CLEANSE
IN YOUR BRIEF
SWEET WATERS ...
THESE DARK HANDS OF LIFE

BASHO



LIGHTNING FLASH, CRASH ...
WAITING IN THE
BAMBOO GROVE
SEE THREE DEW-DROPS FALL

BUSON



ASHES MY BURNT HUT ...
BUT WONDERFUL
THE CHERRY
BLOOMING ON MY HILL

HOKUSHI

LIFE? BUTTERFLY
ON A SWAYING GRASS
THAT'S ALL . . .
BUT EXQUISITE!

SOIN



GLORIOUS THE MOON . . .
THEREFORE OUR THANKS
DARK CLOUDS
COME TO REST OUR NECKS

BASHO



WHAT A PEONY . . .
DEMANDING TO BE
MEASURED
BY MY LITTLE FAN!

ISSA



UNDER CHERRY-TREES
SOUP, THE SALAD,
FISH AND ALL . . .
SEASONED WITH PETALS

BASHO





NOW FROM CHERRY-TREES . . .
MILLIONS OF MAIDENS
FLYING
FIERCE WAR-LORD STORM
SADAIYE



MOON SO BRIGHT FOR LOVE!
COME CLOSER, QUILT . . .
ENFOLD
MY PASSIONATE COLD!
SAMPU



TOO CURIOUS FLOWER
WATCHING US PASS,
MET DEATH . . .
OUR HUNGRY DONKEY
BASHO



CLOUD OF CHERRY-BLOOM . . .
TOLLING TWILIGHT
BELL . . . TEMPLE
UENO? ASAKURA?
BASHO

MUST SPRINGTIME FADE?
THEN CRY ALL BIRDS . . .
AND FISHES'
COLD PALE EYES POUR TEARS

BASHO



A NURSEMAID SCARECROW . . .
FRIGHTENING THE
WIND AND SUN
FROM PLAYING BABY

ISSA



ON HER DEAD SON
IN WHAT WINDY LAND
WANDERS NOW
MY LITTLE DEAR
DRAGONFLY HUNTER?

CHIYO-NI



A SADDENING WORLD:
FLOWERS WHOSE SWEET
BLOOMS MUST FALL . . .
AS WE TOO, ALAS . . .

ISSA





DESCRIBE PLUM-BLOSSOMS?
BETTER THAN MY
VERSES... WHITE
WORDLESS BUTTERFLIES

REIKAN



LEND ME WATER PLEASE?
SOME FRESH YOUNG
MORNING-GLORY,
CARELESS... TOOK MY WELL

CHIYO-NI



A YOUNG SISTER
PITIFUL... ON MY
OUTSTRETCHED PALM
AT DUSK DIES
THE LITTLE FIREFLY

KYORAI



YOU STUPID SCARECROW!
UNDER YOUR VERY
STICK-FEET
BIRDS ARE STEALING BEANS!

YAYU

AFTERNOON SHOWER . . .
WALKING AND TALKING
IN THE STREET:
UMBRELLA AND RAINCOAT!
BUSON



IN THE FARTHER FIELD
A SCARECROW KEPT ME
COMPANY . . .
WALKING AS I WALKED
SANIN



PRETTY BUTTERFLIES . . .
BE CAREFUL OF
PINE-NEEDLE POINTS
IN THIS GUSTY WIND!
SHUSEN



AH, UNREQUITED LOVE!
NOW ELEVATE YOUR CHIN
AND KEEN
TOM-CAT, TO THE MOON!
KYORAI





HI! KIDS MIMICKING
CORMORANTS ... YOU ARE
MORE LIKE
REAL CORMORANTS THAN
THEY!

ISSA



BUZZING THE BEE TRADES
PEONY FOR PEONY
WITH THE BUTTERFLY

TAIGI



SUCH UTTER SILENCE!
EVEN THE CRICKETS'
SINGING ...
MUFFLED BY HOT ROCKS

BASHO



FAR ACROSS LOW MIST
INTERMITTENTLY
THE LAKE
LIFTS A SNOW-WHITE SAIL

GAKOKU

A WHITE SWAN SWIMMING . . .
PARTING WITH HER
UNMOVED BREAST
CHERRY-PETALED POND

ROKA



FOR A COOL EVENING
I HIRED THE
OLD TEMPLE PORCH . . .
PENNY IN THE DISH

SHIKI



QUITE A HUNDRED GOURDS
SPROUTING FROM
THE FERTILE SOUL . . .
OF A SINGLE VINE

CHIYO-NI



SWALLOW IN THE DUSK . . .
SPARE MY LITTLE
BUZZING FRIENDS
AMONG THE FLOWERS

BASHO





OLD DARK SLEEPY POOL . . .
QUICK UNEXPECTED
FROG
GOES PLOP! WATERSPLASH!

BASHO



MY SHADOWY PATH
I'VE SWEPT ALL DAY
AND NOW . . . OH NO!
CAMELLIA-SHOWER!

YAHIA



HARD THE BEGGAR'S BED . . .
BUT SOCIABLE
AND BUSY
WITH INSECT-TALKING

CHIYO-NI



COME COME! COME OUT!
FROM BOGS OLD FROGS
COMMAND THE DARK
AND LOOK . . . THE STARS!

KIKAKU

OVER THE MOUNTAIN
BRIGHT THE FULL WHITE
MOON NOW SMILES ...
ON THE FLOWER-THIEF

ISSA



STARTING TO CALL YOU:
COME WATCH
THESE BUTTERFLIES ...
OH! I'M ALL ALONE

TAIGI



GOOD FRIEND GRASSHOPPER
WILL YOU PLAY
THE CARETAKER
FOR MY LITTLE GRAVE?

ISSA



A LOST CHILD CRYING
STUMBLING OVER
THE DARK FIELDS ...
CATCHING FIREFLIES

RYUSUI





THE SNAKE DEPARTED
BUT THE LITTLE EYES
THAT GLARED . . .
DEW, SHINING IN THE GRASS
KYOSHI



AH! BRAVE DRAGON-FLY . . .
TAKING FOR YOUR PERCH
THIS SWATTER
CONSECRATE TO DEATH

KOHYO



I RAISED MY KNIFE TO IT:
THEN WALKED
EMPTY-HANDED ON . . .
PROUD ROSE OF SHARON

SAMPU



GIDDY GRASSHOPPER
TAKE CARE . . . DO NOT
LEAP AND CRUSH
THESE PEARLS OF DEWDROP

ISSA

DARTING DRAGON-FLY . . .

PULL OFF ITS SHINY

WINGS AND LOOK . . .

BRIGHT RED PEPPER-POD

KIKAKU



REPLY:

BRIGHT RED PEPPER-POD . . .

IT NEEDS BUT SHINY

WINGS AND LOOK . . .

DARTING DRAGON-FLY!

BASHO



TINY SENTENCES

BRUSHING SOFT ON

MY SHUTTERS . . .

BUSH-CLOVER VOICES

SESSHII



MIRROR-POND OF STARS . . .

SUDDENLY A SUMMER

SHOWER

DIMPLES THE WATER

SORA





SADNESS AT TWILIGHT . . .
VILLAIN! I HAVE
LET MY HAND
CUT THAT PEONY

BUSON



IN DIM DUSK AND SCENT
A WITNESS
NOW HALF HIDDEN . . .
EVENFALL ORCHID

BUSON



NOW BE A GOOD BOY
TAKE GOOD CARE OF
OUR HOUSE . . .
CRICKET MY CHILD

ISSA



WAKE! THE SKY IS LIGHT!
LET US TO THE ROAD
AGAIN . . .
COMPANION BUTTERFLY!

BASHO

STILLNESS . . . THEN THE BAT
FLYING AMONG
THE WILLOWS
BLACK AGAINST GREEN SKY
KIKAKU



NOW MY LONELINESS
FOLLOWING
THE FIREWORKS . . .
LOOK! A FALLING STAR!
SHIKI



STUPID HOT MELONS . . .
ROLLING
LIKE FAT IDIOTS
OUT FROM LEAFY SHADE!
KYORA



FOR MORNING-GLORIES
I CAN FORESEE GRAVE
DANGER . . .
SINGLE-STICK PRACTICE
CHORA





CAN'T IT GET AWAY
FROM THE STICKY
PINE-BRANCHES . . .
CICADA SINGING?

GIJOENS



SILENT THE OLD TOWN . . .
THE SCENT OF FLOWERS
FLOATING . . .
AND EVENING BELL

BASHO



VENDOR OF BRIGHT FANS
CARRYING HIS PACK
OF BREEZE . . .
SUFFOCATING HEAT!

SHIKI



VOICES OF TWO BELLS
THAT SPEAK FROM
TWILIGHT TEMPLES . . .
AH! COOL DIALOGUE

BUSON

DEEP IN DARK FOREST
A WOODCUTTER'S
DULL AXE TALKING . . .
AND A WOODCUTTER

BUSON



CAMELLIA-PETAL
FELL IN SILENT DAWN . . .
SPILLING
A WATER-JEWEL

BASHO



IN THE TWILIGHT RAIN
THESE BRILLIANT-HUED
HIBISCUS . . .
A LOVELY SUNSET

BASHO



FRIEND, THAT OPEN MOUTH
REVEALS YOUR
WHOLE INTERIOR . . .
SILLY HOLLOW FROG!

ANON.





BUTTERFLY ASLEEP
FOLDED SOFT ON
TEMPLE BELL . . .
THEN BRONZE GONG RANG!
BUSON



GOOD EVENING BREEZE!
CROOKED AND
MEANDERING
YOUR HOMEWARD JOURNEY
ISSA



SEE THE MORNING BREEZE
RUFFLING HIS SO
SILKY HAIR . . .
COOL CATERPILLAR
BUSON



OH LUCKY BEGGAR! . . .
BRIGHT HEAVEN
AND COOL EARTH
YOUR SUMMER OUTFIT
KIKAKU

THE TURNIP FARMER ROSE
AND WITH A FRESH-
PULLED TURNIP ...
POINTED TO MY ROAD

ISSA



FLOWER IN THE STREAM
THUS TOO MY LOVELY LIFE
MUST END, ANOTHER
FLOWER ...
TO FALL AND FLOAT AWAY

ONITSURA



I AM GOING OUT ...
BE GOOD AND PLAY
TOGETHER
MY CRICKET CHILDREN

ISSA



NOT A VOICE OR STIR ...
DARKNESS LIES ON
FIELDS AND STREETS
SAD : THE MOON HAS SET

IMOZENI





LADY BUTTERFLY
PERFUMES HER WINGS
BY FLOATING
OVER THE ORCHID

BASHO



IF STRANGERS THREATEN
TURN INTO FAT
GREEN BULLFROGS . . .
POND-COOLING MELONS

ISSA



YELLOW EVENING SUN . . .
LONG SHADOW
OF THE SCARECROW
REACHES TO THE ROAD

SHOHA



A CAMELLIA
DROPPED DOWN INTO
STILL WATERS
OF A DEEP DARK WELL

BUSON

FOR THE EMPEROR
HIMSELF HE WILL NOT
LIFT HIS HAT ...
A STIFF-BACKED SCARECROW
DANSUI



IN THE HOLY DUSK
NIGHTINGALES BEGIN
THEIR PSALM ...
GOOD! THE DINNER-GONG!
BUSON



LIVE IN SIMPLE FAITH ...
JUST AS THIS
TRUSTING CHERRY
FLOWERS, FADES, AND FALLS
ISSA



NIGHT IS BRIGHT WITH STARS
... SILLY WOMAN,
WHIMPERING:
SHALL I LIGHT THE LAMP?
ETSUJIN





BLACK DESOLATE MOOR . . .
I BOW BEFORE
THE BUDDHA
LIGHTED IN THUNDER

KAKEI



DIRTY BATH-WATER
WHERE CAN I POUR
YOU? . . . INSECTS
SINGING IN THE GRASS

ONITSURA



WEE BITTER CRICKET
CRYING ALL THIS
SUNNY DAY . . .
OR IS HE LAUGHING?

OEMARU



A SHORT SUMMER NIGHT . . .
BUT IN THIS SOLEMN
DARKNESS
ONE PEONY BLOOMED

BUSON

LONG THE SUMMER DAY . . .
PATTERNS ON
THE OCEAN SAND . . .
OUR IDLE FOOTPRINTS

SHIKI



ANGRY I STRODE HOME . . .
BUT STOOPING IN
MY GARDEN
CALM OLD WILLOW-TREE

RYOTA



OH DO NOT SWAT THEM . . .
UNHAPPY FLIES
FOREVER
WRINGING THEIR THIN HANDS

ISSA



SEE . . . THE HEAVY LEAF
ON THE SILENT
WINDLESS DAY . . .
FALLS OF ITS OWN WILL

BONCHO





RASH TOM-CAT LOVER ...
CARELESS EVEN
OF THAT RICE
STUCK IN YOUR WHISKERS
TAIGI



MOON SO BRIGHT FOR LOVE!
OH, HEAR THE FARMER
BY THAT LIGHT ...
FLAILING HIS LOVELY RICE!
ETSUJIN



NOW THE SWINGING BRIDGE
IS QUIETED
WITH CREEPERS ...
LIKE OUR TENDRILLED LIFE
BASHO



DANCING IN MY SILKS
MONEY TOSSED ITSELF
AWAY ...
PRETTY, THIS PAPER DRESS!
SONO-JO

THE SEA DARKENING . . .
OH VOICES OF THE
WILD DUCKS
CRYING, WHIRLING, WHITE
BASHO



WHITE MOTH, FLUTTER OFF:
FLY BACK INTO
MY BREAST NOW
QUICKLY, MY OWN SOUL!

WAFU



NINE TIMES ARISING
TO SEE THE MOON . . .
WHOSE SOLEMN PACE
MARKS ONLY MIDNIGHT YET
BASHO



WATCHING, I WONDER
WHAT POET COULD PUT
DOWN HIS QUILL . . .
A PLUPERFECT MOON!
ONITSURA





DO YOUR WORST, OLD FROST
YOU CAN NO LONGER
WOUND ME . . .
LAST CHRYSANTHEMUM!

OEMARU



PEBBLES SHINING CLEAR,
AND CLEAR
SIX SILENT FISHES . . .
DEEP AUTUMN WATER

BUSON



A BRIGHT AUTUMN MOON . . .
IN THE SHADOW OF
EACH GRASS
AN INSECT CHIRPING

BUSON



YOU TURN AND SUDDENLY
THERE IN PURPLING
AUTUMN SKY . . .
WHITE FUJIAMI!

ONITSURA

HERE, WHERE A THOUSAND
CAPTAINS SWORE GRAND
CONQUEST . . . TALL
GRASS THEIR MONUMENT

BASHO



YELLOW AUTUMN MOON . . .
UNIMPRESSED
THE SCARECROW STANDS
SIMPLY LOOKING BORED

ISSA



WHITE CHRYSANTHEMUM . . .
BEFORE THAT
PERFECT FLOWER
SCISSORS HESITATE

BUSON



CRUEL AUTUMN WIND
CUTTING TO THE
VERY BONES . . .
OF MY POOR SCARECROW

ISSA





NOW IN LATE AUTUMN
LOOK, ON MY OLD
RUBBISH-HEAP . . .
BLUE MORNING-GLORY

TAIGI



A SINGLE CRICKET
CHIRPS, CHIRPS, CHIRPS,
AND IS STILL . . . MY
CANDLE SINKS AND DIES

ANON.



FIREWORKS ENDED
AND SPECTATORS
GONE AWAY . . .
AH, HOW VAST AND DARK!

SHIKI



TWO ANCIENT PINE-TREES . . .
A PAIR OF GNARLED
AND STURDY HANDS
WITH TEN GREEN FINGERS

RYOTO

I MUST TURN OVER . . .
BEWARE OF LOCAL
EARTHQUAKES
BEDFELLOW CRICKET!

ISSA



OH! I ATE THEM ALL
AND OH! WHAT A
STOMACH-ACHE . . .
GREEN STOLEN APPLES

SHIKI



NOW IN SAD AUTUMN
AS I TAKE MY
DARKENING PATH . . .
A SOLITARY BIRD

BASHO



AT OUR LAST PARTING
BENDING BETWEEN
BOAT AND SHORE . . .
THAT WEEPING WILLOW

SHIKI





AT FURUE IN RAIN
GRAY WATER AND
GRAY SAND . . .
PICTURE WITHOUT LINES
BUSON



OH SORRY TOM-CAT
BIGGER BLACKER
KNIGHTS OF LOVE
HAVE KNOCKED YOU OUT!
SHIKO



THE OLD FISHERMAN
UNALTERABLY
INTENT . . .
COLD EVENING RAIN
BUSON



WHILE I TURNED MY HEAD
THAT TRAVELER
I'D JUST PASSED . . .
MELTED INTO MIST
SHIKI

VISITING THE GRAVES . . .
TROTTING ON TO SHOW
THE WAY . . .
OLD FAMILY DOG

ISSA



WILL WE MEET AGAIN
HERE AT YOUR
FLOWERING GRAVE . . .
TWO WHITE BUTTERFLIES?

BASHO



SO ENVIALE . . .
MAPLE-LEAVES
MOST GLORIOUS
CONTEMPLATING DEATH

SHIKO



SHOCKING . . . THE RED OF
LACQUERED FINGERNAILS
AGAINST
A WHITE CHRYSANTHEMUM

CHIYO-NI





DRY CHEERFUL CRICKET
CHIRPING, KEEPS
THE AUTUMN GAY...
CONTEMPTUOUS OF FROST
BASHO



DEEPEN, DROP, AND DIE
MANY-HUED
CHRYSANTHEMUMS...
ONE BLACK EARTH FOR ALL
RYUSUI



BEFORE BOILED CHESTNUTS
CROSS-LEGGED LAD
IS SQUATTING...
CARVED WOODEN BUDDHA
ISSA



DEFEATED IN THE FRAY
BY BIGGER BATTLERS
FOR LOVE...
TOM-CAT SEEKS A MOUSE
SHIKO

ASKING THEIR ROAD . . .
SEVEN YELLOW
BAMBOO HATS
ALL TURNED TOGETHER
ANON.



TORCHES! COME AND SEE
THE BURGLAR I HAVE
CAPTURED . . .
OH! MY ELDEST SON!

SOKAN



AUTUMN MOSQUITOES
BUZZ ME, BITE ME . . .
SEE, I AM
LONG PREPARED FOR DEATH
SHIKI



NICE: WILD PERSIMMONS . . .
AND NOTICE HOW
THE MOTHER
EATS THE BITTER PARTS
ISSA





GRAY MARSH, BLACK CLOUD
... FLAPPING AWAY
IN AUTUMN RAIN
LAST OLD SLOW HERON

ANON.



FIRST WHITE SNOW OF FALL
JUST ENOUGH TO BEND
THE LEAVES
OF FADED DAFFODILS

BASHO



WHAT A GORGEOUS ONE
THAT FAT SLEEK HUGE
OLD CHESTNUT
I COULD NOT GET AT ...

ISSA



NONE BROKE THE SILENCE ...
NOR VISITOR
NOR HOST ... NOR
WHITE CHRYSANTHEMUM

RYOTA

IF YOU WERE SILENT
FLIGHT OF HERONS
ON DARK SKY ...
OH! AUTUMN SNOWFLAKES!
SOKAN



CHILLING AUTUMN RAIN ...
THE MOON, TOO BRIGHT
FOR SHOWERS,
SLIPS FROM THEIR FINGERS
TOKUKU



RAINY-MONTH, DRIPPING
ON AND ON
AS I LIE ABED ...
AH, OLD MAN'S MEMORIES!
BUSON



NOVEMBER SUNRISE ...
UNCERTAIN, THE COLD
STORKS STAND ...
BARE STICKS IN WATER
KAKEI





FROM DARK WINDY HILLS
VOICES DRIVING
WEARY HORSES . . .
SHOUTING OF THE STORM
KYOKUSUI



SLANTING LINES OF RAIN . . .
ON THE DUSTY
SAMISEN
A MOUSE IS TROTTING

BUSON



OH FORMER RENTER
I KNOW IT ALL, ALL . . .
DOWN TO
THE VERY COLD YOU FELT

ISSA



GRAY MOOR, UNMARRED
BY ANY PATH . . .
A SINGLE BRANCH . . .
A BIRD . . . NOVEMBER

ANON.

LONELY UMBRELLA
PASSING THE HOUSE
AT TWILIGHT ...
FIRST SNOW FALLING SOFT
YAHĀ



CARVEN GODS LONG GONE ...
DEAD LEAVES ALONE
FOREGATHER
ON THE TEMPLE PORCH
BASHŌ



FIVE OR SIX OF US
REMAIN, HUDDLED
TOGETHER ...
BENT OLD WILLOW-TREES
KYORAI



PLUME OF PAMPAS GRASS
TREMBLING
IN EVERY WIND ...
HUSH, MY LONELY HEART
ISSA





TEA-WATER, TIRED
WAITING WHILE WE
WATCHED THE SNOW ...
FROZE ITSELF A HAT

SOKAN



COLD FIRST WINTER RAIN ...
POOR MONKEY,
YOU TOO COULD USE
A LITTLE WOVEN CAPE

BASHO



WINTER RAIN DEEPENS
LICHENED LETTERS
ON THE GRAVE ...
AND MY OLD SADNESS

ROKA



COLD WINTER SHOWER ...
SEE ALL THE PEOPLE
RUNNING
ACROSS SETA BRIDGE!

JOSO

OLD WEARY WILLOWS . . .
I THOUGHT HOW LONG
THE ROAD WOULD BE
WHEN YOU WENT AWAY

BUSON



NO OIL TO READ BY . . .
I AM OFF TO BED
BUT AH! . . .
MY MOONLIT PILLOW

BASHO



DESCENDING SEAWARD
FAR-OFF MOUNTAIN
WATERFALL . . .
WINTER NIGHTS ARE STILL

KYOKUSUI



ALL HEAVEN AND EARTH
FLOWERED WHITE
OBLITERATE . . .
SNOW . . . UNCEASING SNOW

HASHIN





CONSIDERATE DOGS . . .
STEPPING OFF
INTO THE SNOW
AS I WALK THE PATH

ISSA



BUT WHEN I HALTED
ON THE WINDY STREET
AT TWILIGHT . . .
SNOW STRUCK AGAINST ME

KITO



CALL HIM BACK! AH NO,
HE'S BLOWN FROM SIGHT
ALREADY . . .
FISH-PEDDLER IN THE SNOW

ANON.



CROSSING IT ALONE
IN COLD MOONLIGHT . . .
THE BRITTLE BRIDGE
ECHOES MY FOOTSTEPS

TAIGI

SUCH A LITTLE CHILD
TO SEND TO BE
A PRIESTLING
ICY POVERTY

SHIKI



WINDY WINTER RAIN . . .
MY SILLY BIG
UMBRELLA
TRIES WALKING BACKWARD

SHISEI-JO



BUDDHA ON THE HILL . . .
FROM YOUR HOLY
NOSE INDEED
HANGS AN ICICLE

ISSA



THIS SNOWY MORNING
THAT BLACK CROW
I HATE SO MUCH . . .
BUT HE'S BEAUTIFUL!

BASHO





LOOK AT THE CANDLE!
WHAT A HUNGRY WIND
IT IS . . .
HUNTING IN THE SNOW!

SEIRA



IF THERE WERE FRAGRANCE
THESE HEAVY SNOW-
FLAKES SETTLING . . .
LILIES ON THE ROCKS

BASHO



AH! I INTENDED
NEVER NEVER
TO GROW OLD . . .
LISTEN: NEW YEAR'S BELL!

JOKUN



SNOW-SWALLOWED VALLEY:
ONLY THE
WINDING RIVER . . .
BLACK FLUENT BRUSH-STROKE

BONCHO

ROARING WINTER STORM
RUSHING TO ITS
UTTER END . . .
EVER-SOUNDING SEA

GONSUI



ELEVEN BRAVE KNIGHTS
CANTER THROUGH THE
WHIRLING SNOW . . .
NOT ONE BENDS HIS NECK

SHIKI



GOING SNOW-VIEWING
ONE BY ONE THE
WALKERS VANISH . . .
WHITELY FALLING VEILS

KATSURI



“YES, COME IN!” I CRIED . . .
BUT AT THE WINDY
SNOW-HUNG GATE
KNOCKING STILL WENT ON

KYORAI





SEE: SURVIVING SUNS
VISIT THE ANCESTRAL
GRAVE...
BEARDED, WITH BENT CANES

BASHO



THE ORPHAN SPEAKS:
THE YEAR-END PARTY...
I AM EVEN ENVIOUS
OF SCOLDED CHILDREN

ISSA



I GAVE THE GREETINGS
OF THE BRIGHT
NEW YEAR... AS THOUGH
I HELD A PLUM-BRANCH

SHIKI



ON JOLLY NEW YEAR'S DAY
MY LAST YEAR'S BILLS
DROP IN
TO PAY THEIR COMPLIMENTS

ANON.

DEATH-SONG:

LEAF ALONE, FLUTTERING
ALAS, LEAF ALONE,
FLUTTERING . . .

FLOATING DOWN THE WIND
ANON.



DEATH-SONG:

I HAVE KNOWN LOVERS . . .
CHERRY-BLOOM . . .
THE NIGHTINGALE . . .

I WILL SLEEP CONTENT
ANON.



DEATH-SONG:

FEVER-FELLED HALF-WAY,
MY DREAMS AROSE
TO MARCH AGAIN . . .
INTO A HOLLOW LAND

BASHO



DEATH-SONG:

THREE LOVELIEST THINGS:
MOONLIGHT . . . CHERRY-
BLOOM . . . NOW I GO
SEEKING SILENT SNOW

RIPPO



